

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the application. In the Office Action of May 5, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Prey*. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection and addresses the Examiner's disposition below.

Independent claims 1 and 7 have each been amended to clarify the language.

Claims 3-6 and 9-12 have been amended in view of the amendments to claims independent claims 1 or 7 from which they depend.

Claims 2 and 8 have been canceled.

Claims 1 and 7, each as amended, each claim activating a plurality of electronic devices in each of which an operating condition is controlled by an externally-supplied control data. Control data is supplied upon power-on to each of the plurality of electronic devices successively over a bus to activate each of the plurality of electronic devices. It is detected whether an activation error has occurred in one or more of the plurality of electronic devices by checking an acknowledge response received from each of the plurality of electronic devices in response to the control data. One or more of the plurality of electronic devices is reactivated when the activation error is detected in the one or more of the plurality of electronic devices, after the control data is supplied to all of the plurality of electronic devices.

Thus, if an electronic device returns an activation error in response to the control data, then another attempt is made to reactivate the electronic device after supplying control data to all of the plurality of electronic devices.

This is clearly unlike *Prey*, which fails to disclose or even suggest Applicant's claimed detection of an activation error or reactivation. *Prey* discloses a way to determine whether individual devices are functioning properly in response to start (activation) commands, without needing to maintain addresses for the individual devices.

In *Prey*, a switching device transmits control commands (*e.g.*, connect, start, and stop) to the individual devices. In response, the individual device may return an acknowledgement (*e.g.*, start acknowledge and stop acknowledge). *Prey* determines that an individual device is not operating properly when it returns a "stop acknowledge" without first having received a corresponding "start" command from the switching device. *Prey's* sequence is shown below:

<u>switching device</u>	<u>individual device</u>
connect 1 →	
start 1 →	
	← start 1 acknowledge – – – – –
connect 2 →	
stop 1 →	
	← stop 1 acknowledge (no error)
connect 3 →	
stop 2 →	
	← no response (no error)
connect 4 →	
stop 3 →	
	← stop 3 acknowledge (error)

As shown above, the "stop 1 acknowledge" does not identify an error, because it is returned after a corresponding "start 1" command. However, "start 3 acknowledge" identifies an error, because it is returned by the individual device, without the individual device first having received a corresponding "start" command. In that case, the individual device somehow "started" with no "start 2" command after it was stopped by the "stop 1" command.

Thus, unlike Applicant's claims 1 and 7 that supplies a control data to activate and checks for an activation error from an acknowledge response received in response to a control data, *Prey* checks for a stop acknowledgement in response to a stop command. In other words, Applicant's claims 1 and 7 verify whether an electronic device activated properly when it was to be activated, while *Prey* verifies whether an individual device activated mistakenly when it was not supposed to be activated. Thus, *Prey* fails to even relate to the same subject matter as Applicant's claims 1 and 7. For at least this reason, *Prey* fails to disclose or even suggest claims 1 and 7.

Further, unlike claims 1 and 7, *Prey* fails to disclose or even suggest reactivating an electronic device after supplying control data to all of the plurality of electronic devices, if an electronic device returns an activation error in response to the control data. For at least this additional reason, *Prey* fails to disclose or even suggest claims 1 and 7.

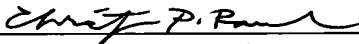
Claims 3-6 and 9-12 depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 or 7 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons that claims 1 and 7 are allowable.

Applicants respectfully submit the rejection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 1, 3-7 and 9-12 are patentable. It is therefore submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

 (Reg. No. 45,034)
Christopher P. Rauch
SONNENSCHN, NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP
P.O. Box #061080
Wacker Drive Station - Sears Tower
Chicago, IL 60606-1080
Telephone 312/876-2606
Customer #26263
Attorneys for Applicant(s)



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Christopher P. Rauch (Reg. No. 45,034)
Christopher P. Rauch